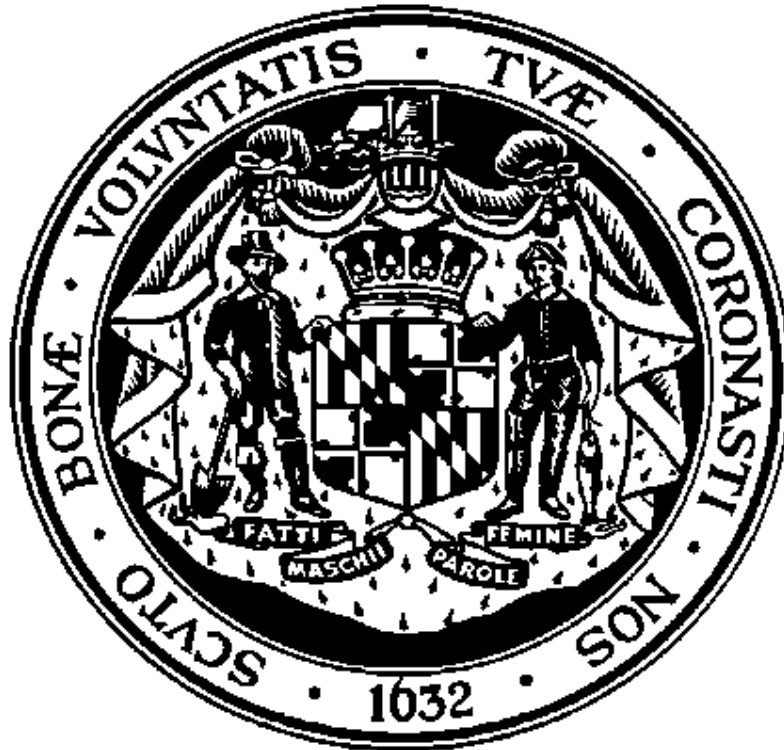


Maryland Public Information Act Manual



Office of the Attorney General

Douglas F. Gansler
Attorney General

Eleventh Edition
2008

MARYLAND PUBLIC INFORMATION ACT MANUAL

**OFFICE OF THE
MARYLAND ATTORNEY GENERAL**

**DOUGLAS F. GANSLER
ATTORNEY GENERAL**

**200 Saint Paul Place
Baltimore, Maryland 21202**

***Eleventh Edition*
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PREFACE

The public's right to information about government activities lies at the heart of a democratic government. Maryland's Public Information Act grants the people of this State a broad right of access to public records while protecting legitimate governmental interests and the privacy rights of individual citizens.

The Attorney General's Office has long sought to ensure that the Public Information Act is implemented correctly and consistently throughout State government. The previous editions of this manual became recognized as a valuable resource for both government officials seeking to meet their responsibilities under the Act and members of the press and public seeking access to information.

Credit for this edition is owed to numerous individuals affiliated with the Office over the years in that each new edition of the Manual attempts to build on the strengths of prior editions. Special thanks, however, are owed to former Deputy Attorney General, now Judge, Dennis M. Sweeney for his work in preparing the first several editions of this manual and to former Assistant Attorney General Jack Schwartz who assumed responsibility for subsequent editions. The most recent editions have been produced under the direction of Assistant Attorney General Robert N. McDonald, Chief Counsel, Opinions and Advice. Special thanks are also owed to Assistant Attorney General William R. Varga, who contributed significantly to this edition, and to Kathleen M. Izdebski who prepared and finalized the manuscript.

Finally, I want to thank the local government officials, members of the private bar, and representatives of the media who have offered many constructive suggestions for the manual.

This Eleventh Edition includes statutory changes through the latest sessions of the General Assembly as well as noteworthy developments in the case law and the opinions of this office. In an effort to keep those interested in the PIA informed of recent developments in a more timely manner, the Office plans to periodically issue supplements to this edition through its web site, <<http://www.oag.state.md.us/Opengov/pia.htm>>. I trust that you will find this new Eleventh Edition and subsequent updates a valuable resource.

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Attorney General
October 2008*

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